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to be clean, should be changed as often as your linen. Extremes meet in this as in other matters. The North American Indian and the courtier of Louis the XIV. had much the same notions about finery; but the Indian was the nearest nature of the two, merely because high heels and periwigs could not be carried through the bushes and over the mountain side.

There is a modification of dress which is characteristic of a peculiar state of the mind. I allude to the studied sobriety of the Quaker costume and the meagre lines that were born of the French Revolution and still are a curse to this generation. These styles of dress spring from criticism, a source whence nothing positive, or great, or beautiful, ever yet came, because negation is its element. This self-complacency, at the absence of certain qualities, owes its existence to a kind of moral deprivation which may be laudable if the Kingdom of Heaven be its object, but which must, from its nature, be poor, and mean, and ineffective, to all but the individual who has earned a right to thank God that he is not as other men.

It is curious to observe how the natural passions adhere to us, even when their direct objects are wanting. The man whose tables groan beneath the produce of twenty farms, what an artillery of destruction does he not maintain? With what care he chooses his guns—selects his powder, and trains his dogs—and all for a few sorry half-tamed birds. A tom-tit is better than nothing. So the other sex, though passed into the sere and yellow leaf, discuss colors, try the knot on both sides, and go through the whole manual of eighteen. I remember hearing a surly, dyspeptic Scotchman, after assisting at a long conference on the subject of bonnets, between two old ladies, growl out, as they moved away, "Egad! ye might as well begin to think of the pattern of a coffin!" For my part, I see in these perseverances a proof of God's goodness, and a promise that, at eighty, if I live so long, I may still be trying to do or to say something worthy of memory.

If there ever be a convenient, characteristic, and beautiful style of dress again in the world, I suspect that it must be come at by a process analogous to that which has formed the French kitchen and modern music, a process which, starting with science and a good natural susceptibility, absorbs and identifies all the happy inventions of local and incidental inspiration, gives you, in the gilded halls of the Café de Paris, the culinary tit-bits of Moscow, and Naples, and Morocco, and brings down the applause of Vienna for Italian groans after liberty, and Scotch warblings fresh as the misty hills where they grew. This is a consummation to be wished. I wait for it patiently, for, after all, I have never yet seen a young beauty that was not, in spite of dress, a beauty still; and I have that confidence in the instincts of the sex, that I should not be surprised if a nun in her cell were to look to see how her veil looked in profile.

HORATIO GREENOUGH.

The obscurity of some maxims is only relative. It is not possible to make clear to the hearer everything that may be useful to him who puts them in practice.—*Goethe*.

THE Landscape Element IN AMERICAN POETRY.

LOWELL.

In my illustrations of the expression of feeling for the external world, I have not selected the three poets whose names stand at the head of my articles, because they were the only ones who seemed to be influenced by landscape, but because they were those who seemed to me to manifest their feeling for it in a more perfectly picturesque form than any others. There are, through the works of most of our poets, occasional passages which would illustrate my ideas, but there are no others whom I should call landscape poets.

If we have found a serenity and majesty in the pictures Bryant gives—a pre-Raphaelite accuracy and minuteness in those of Street—we shall find a new form of artistic perception in Lowell—a recognition of the fitting, momentary beauty of Nature—of its action and changes—what in painting we should call *effects*. This characterizes him more strongly than anything else derivable from the outer world. There is no absolute portraiture of things, but simple impressions received from them. For instance, in the following:

"I love her with a love as still
As a broad river's peaceful might,
Which, by high tower and lowly mill,
Goes wandering at its own will,
And yet doth ever flow aright.

And on its full, deep breast serene,
Like quiet isles my duties lie;
It flows around them and between,
And makes them fresh, and fair, and green,
Sweet homes wherein to live and die."

It is not the river that receives his love, but it is felt as a type, merely, of something immortal and glorious. You feel, perhaps, all that the river would have made you feel, but not because it is described to you, but because you understand the emotion of which it is an illustration.

Lowell often paints phenomena most vividly, though rarely by suggestion of *forms* of things. I do not, indeed, feel impressed that he is influenced by beauty of form. In the poem "To a Pine Tree," occurs a passage in which, while the emotional color and general effect are impressively given, there is no distinction whatever felt between the forms of rock and those of ice. The epithet "crag," is hardly one which expresses the nature of ice, while "splinter" is entirely expressive—

"Thou alone know'st the splendor of winter,
'Mid thy snow-silvered, hushed precipices,
Hearing crags of green ice groan and splinter,
And then plunge down the muffled abysses
In the quiet of midnight."

Note here, too, the employment of means to strengthen the impression, in the alliteration of harsh sounds in the third line—probably unconscious, but still, effective.

The same accurate painting of phenomena will be found in the following quotations from various poems:

"Untremulous in the river clear,
Toward the sky's image hangs the imaged bridge;

So still the air, that I can hear
The slender clarion of the unseen midge;
Out of the stillness, with a gathering creep,
Like rising wind in leaves, which now decreases,
Now lulls, now swells, and all the while increases,
The huddling tramp of a drove of sheep
Tilts the loose planks, and then as gradually ceases
In dust on the other side."

"The pale and quiet moon
Makes her calm forehead bare,
And the last fragments of the storm,
Like shattered rigging from a fight at sea,
Silent and few, are drifting over me."

"O'er yon bare knoll the pointed cedar-shadows
Drowse on the crisp, grey moss; the ploughman's call
Creeps faint as smoke from black, fresh-furrowed
meadows;

The single crow a single caw lets fall;
And all around me every bush and tree
Says Autumn's here, and Winter soon will be,
Who snows his soft, white sleep and silence over all."

In the last quotation observe the autumn feeling in the selection of an evergreen to throw his shadows, and the quiet color in the "crisp grey moss." Again, in speaking of the spots of ferns on the meadow, he says they are—

"As if the silent shadow of a cloud
Hung there becalmed, with the next breath to fleet."

which exactly expresses the nature of the effect, which I have often in the autumn been puzzled to distinguish from cloud shadows.

But perhaps the best instances of downright painting in words Lowell has ever produced, and indeed, so far as I know, they are unique in poetry, are the poems in the "Appledore Gallery," published in the CRAYON. I can hardly select, they are so entirely in this vein. There is in this following something so artistic in its rendering of distant detail, that it is difficult to believe it not to have been written by a painter:—

"How doubtfully it fades and fades
And glows again, yon craggy steep,
O'er which through color's dreamiest grades,
The yellow sunbeams pause and creep!
Now pink it blooms, now glimmers grey,
Now shadows to a filmy blue,
Tries one, tries all, and will not stay,
But flits from opal hue to hue,
And runs through every tenderest range
Of change that seems not to be change,
So rare the sweep, so nice the art,
That lays no stress on any part,
But shifts, and lingers, and persuades;
So soft that sun-brush in the west,
That asks no costlier pigment's aids,
But mingling knobs, flaws, angles, dints,
Indifferent of worst or best,
Enchants the cliffs with wreaths and hints,
And gracious preludings of tints,
When all seems fixed, yet all evades,
And indefinitely pervades
Perpetual motion with perpetual rest!"

The perception of color is something altogether exquisite, and the expression, "of change that seems not to be change," is so like what every painter must have felt in his experience in painting distance, that I could not say where anything more *pictorial* could be found. Again, in the description of the Sunset—

"But now the strips
Of western vapor, straight and thin,
From which the horizon's swervings win

A grace of contrast, take fire and burn
 Like splinters of touchwood, whose edges a mould
 Of ashes o'erfeathers; northward turn
 For an instant, and let your eye grow cold
 On Agameticus, and when once more
 You look, 'tis as if the land-breeze, growing,
 From the smouldering brands the film were blowing,
 And brightening them down to the very core;
 Yet they momentarily cool, and dampen, and deaden,
 The crimson turns golden, the gold turns leaden,
 Hardening into one black bar,
 O'er which, from the hollow Heaven afar,
 Shoots a splinter of light like diamond,
 Half seen, half fancied; by and by,
 Beyond whatever is most beyond,
 In the uttermost waste of desert sky,
 Grows a star;
 And over it, visible spirit of dew—
 Ah! stir not, speak not, hold your breath,
 Or surely the miracle vanisheth—
 The new moon, tranced in unspeakable blue!

In "The Vision of Sir Launfal" are some passages expressing most gloriously the poet's enjoyment of the sunny soul of nature:—

"And what is so rare as a day in June?
 Then, if ever, come perfect days;
 Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,
 And over it softly her warm ear lays:
 Whether we look, or whether we listen,
 We hear life murmur, and see it glisten;
 Every clod feels a stir of might,
 An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
 And, grasping blindly above it for light,
 Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers.

"The crows flapped over by twos and threes,
 In the pool drowns the cattle up to their knees,
 The little birds sang, as if it were
 The one day of summer in all the year,
 And the very leaves seemed to sing on the trees:
 The castle alone in the landscape lay
 Like an outpost of winter, dull and grey."

Yet there are a few passages in which he seems to have sat down to study foregrounds, as the description of a stone wall with its surroundings; and, by the way, this forms one of the most available foreground incidents in our cultivated landscape, and one which might be used to greater advantage by our artists than it is:—

"O'er yon low wall, which guards one unkempt zone,
 Where vines, and weeds, and scrub-oaks intertwine,
 Safe from the plough, whose rough, discordant stone,
 Is massed to one soft grey by lichens fine,
 The tangled blackberry, crossed and recrossed, weaves,
 A prickly network of ensanguined leaves;
 Hard by, with coral beads, the prim black-alders shine."

I should judge that Lowell was neither botanist nor geologist, and, indeed, cared little for the forms in which nature manifested herself to him, except when some particular association endears a passage of scenery to him. Thus he paints well a scene on the River Charles, which runs in sight of his birth-place:—

"Below, the Charles—a stripe of nether sky,
 Now hid by rounded apple-trees between,
 Whose gaps the misplaced sail sweeps bellying by,
 Now flickering golden through a woodland screen,
 Then spreading out at his next turn beyond,
 A silver circle, like an inland pond—
 Slips seaward silently through marshes purple and green."

If it were possible for a poet to do anything well at the desire of another, I wish that Lowell would dive deeper into the grasses and ferns, and enjoy more heartily the perfection of the individual form. He loves the violet and dandelion, but only

from human association; and in his poems to them they do not seem to be regarded as a portion of the landscape. I do not know if it were possible to find in one mind the free love of the sentiment of nature which he has, and the thoughtful regarding of the simplest weed which characterizes Bryant's November:—

"One smile on the brown hills and naked trees
 And the dark rocks whose summer wreaths are cast,
 And the blue gentian flower, that, in the breeze,
 Nods lonely, of her beauteous race the last."

I have never seen the qualities united in a painter: it were, perhaps, as reasonable to expect to find Titian and Raphael united, as the phenomenal and *formal** in perfection in one poet.

G. M. JAMES.

THE WILDERNESS AND ITS WATERS.

CHAPTER II.

A FOREST EPISODE.

THE eastern sky was grey and clear when awaking from excited sleep I looked out of my six-paned window. There was promise of a glorious day in the serene heavens and quiet air; and shaking off my dreams, I walked out into the morning light. There was a slight frost on the grass, and it sounded crisply under my feet. The lake was spread out before me, broken by islands, and veiled by a thin blue vapor which rose from its surface, and spread out like a sheet of snow, concealing all reflections. The islands were rugged, rocky prominences jutting out of this blue and white expanse, covered by trees, above which, eminent, stood tall gaunt pines, in the top of one of which croaked a raven—no bird of omen for us, however. All was wild and solitary. A little clearing around the cabin where we had passed the night, dotted with black stumps, opened a space to the lake-shore—all else was forest, unbroken. A couple of cows tinkled their bells within the little grazing space allowed them by the length of the ropes, by which they were confined, each to a stump. Beyond was a patch of Indian corn and a field of oats, late ripened, and now just turning yellow. A flock of barn-yard fowls ran everywhere they pleased; and by the side of a log-shed, a young bear gambolled in his chain within friendly distance of a grave looking hound, who lay, with his head on his paws, looking off on the lake. I walked to the landing where our boat lay, dipped my face into the lake, and returned to rouse my companions, just as the sun which had been warming the grey of the sky to a golden yellow, burst above the hills. The light fell on the vapor, waking it to undulations, and making it lift in wreaths and flakes, and gradually it floated up and melted away. The frost dissolved on the sunny sides of the little hummocks of grass, leaving their shadows as blue, seemingly, as the sky over-head. The blue-jays sailed screaming around in search of the grasshopper and crickets, which the sun had warmed out; and the chickens, too, raced after the hapless few who ventured to try their stiffened wings.

In the cabin, all was astir. The men-folks were absent on an expedition, except

* I use the word in an incorrect sense, because by its parallelism it expresses what I mean, better than any I know.

one of the young men; but Mother J. had busied herself early with getting our breakfast, and we were discussing it before the frost was all off the grass. This duty finished, we lazily strolled out into the sunlight. Not a breath of wind was stirring, and two or three long streaks of cirrus, apparently left there from the display of the last evening, swept across the firmament. The slightest possible haze lay on the hills beyond the lake, and the trees were in that early change of foliage when the greens grow yellow and rich, as though bringing out, in their autumn need, the sunlight they had been drinking in through the summer.

The various firs made masses of dark green here and there; and just at the summit of the hills, where they rolled back to the blue mountains, the crimson and pale yellow began to steal in. The lake lay in perfect glassy quiet. We walked down to the landing, and threw ourselves at length on the grass where the meadow sloped down to the water. The minnows were gliding around through the maze of rushes and lily pads, huddling and scattering alternately, and occasionally breaking the surface with their tiny leap at the insects. Some immense yellow frogs lay half out of the water, resting on the lily leaves, and eyed us unintermittingly. Out on the lake a pair of loons swam, diving and reappearing, and with their shrill cry breaking the otherwise entire silence that prevailed. For an instant, the water far out would be ruffled, as if by a breeze, by the schools of minnows that had ventured out into the deeper water, and were pursued by the lake trout, whose leap and splash followed their fearful flurry.

We deliberated on our next step forward, for we were now but half-way to our fishing grounds. It was yet thirty miles to the best localities for trout. We had found, by inquiring of the son of our hostess, whom we engaged as one of our guides, that there was a good bark shanty six miles on, and excellent fishing near by. We concluded to go as far as that and stop for the night, fishing at day-break, and, after breakfast, pursuing our journey. Returning to the cabin to make our preparations, we dispatched "Bill" for another guide who lived three miles down the lake, and ordered dinner at twelve. Angler wanted to make some flies, such as he had found to be the most killing by the previous days' fishing—Student wanted to go into the woods, and so, the former undoing his traps, the latter shouldered his fowling-piece, and he and I wandered off. There was a light wagon track, only two ruts in the turf, leading back to the forest. The maize stood tall on one hand, just shrivelled by the slight first frosts, which had wilted the pumpkin vines down, and left the sunflowers towering black and dead over the patch of prostrate melon vines by the well-curb. On the other side of the path was a wide field of oats, above the heads of which now and then a blackened stump reared itself. The road led us to a "pair of bars" in the huge pile of fallen trees that served as a fence to keep the cattle from coming into the grain, after they had been turned loose in the woods. A zone of blackened, half dead trees marked the limit of the burning by which the land had been placed in a tillable condition. Some prostrate